

nearest city; 14 percent were between 10 and 20 miles; and 11 percent were more than 20 miles from the nearest city.

Farmers using the pick-your-own, roadside stand, and public farmers' markets were more likely to be more than 20 miles from the nearest city than farmers using other methods (18-25 percent versus about 7 percent). However, except for those using farmers' markets, between 40 and 48 percent of farmers were located within 5 miles of the nearest city.

The impact of distance from potential customers in choosing methods to sell directly to consumers is illustrated in table 22. Farmers seem to prefer other methods when the distance to a public farmers' market increases. This tendency was especially pronounced for farmers selling to consumers through roadside stands, farm buildings, and other methods. About 44 to 57 percent of the farmers using these methods were located 20 miles or more from cities with public farmers' markets.

The type of road accessible to direct-marketing farmers affects the convenience or inconvenience to potential customers. The importance of access to a paved road or street is clearly illustrated in table 26: only 9 percent of direct-marketing farmers were located on unpaved roads, 63 percent were located on secondary paved roads, and 16 percent were located on U.S. and major State highways.

Use of Advertising

Advertising was one of the leading added cost items incurred by direct-marketing farmers compared with selling to conventional wholesale buyers. About 84 percent of the farmers reported using some form of advertising, ranging from about 77 percent in Maryland and Delaware to 86 percent in the southern New England States (table 27). Almost 80 percent indicated that they relied on "word of mouth" advertising by satisfied customers to attract potential customers. While "word of mouth" information conveyed by satisfied customers does not meet the classical definition of advertising (using public media--news-papers, radio, television, etc.--for a fee), it is conceded to be one of the most effective means of attracting customers for products and services, since the personal endorsement of friends and acquaintances tends to be believable. However, producers of goods and services must attract an initial core of customers, and continually strive to maintain and broaden their base of customers by other means as there is a continuous loss of customers through attrition. Direct-marketing farmers used various media to inform customers of their existence and the products available for sale. Road signs, newspapers, direct mail, and radio were the most important media for direct-marketing farmers in the nine States surveyed.

The low percentage of farmers selling through farmers' markets who reported advertising costs is understandable since the managers of such markets conduct their own advertising and publicity to attract customers. Thus, farmers who did not use other methods of direct selling or advertise individually probably would not incur any direct advertising costs.